



NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF KANSAS THEATRE

# the marquee • Volume 15 no. 4

Summer 1989

*In Dodge City . . .*

## Theatre, Radio Station Team To Promote Show

When the **Boot Hill Museum Repertory Company** in Dodge City scheduled a return engagement of their sell-out production of "Greater Tuna," they needed extra coverage from the local media to promote the run. The result will be a unique promotional campaign which takes advantage of the use of radio in the "Greater Tuna" script, and showcases not only the cast members involved in "Greater Tuna" but also the company's entire upcoming season, according to museum entertainment director, **Don Steele**.

This particular production features a radio station and emphasizes its importance to the small, fictional town of Tuna, Texas.

The main element of the campaign is a week of appearances on the air on Dodge City's KGNO/K-95 by two cast members, who play disc jockeys on a small radio station in Tuna. For fifteen uninterrupted minutes every day, from 4:15 to 4:30 pm, two actors will take to the air waves, bringing news and weather from Tuna, the Tuna Community Calendar, and ads for Tuna merchants. In addition they discuss the latest Tuna gossip, host a call-in segment for voicing local opinions, and even give away some prizes donated by Tuna businesses.

### *KAC Awards Grants For FY90*

The Kansas Arts Commission has awarded AKT a \$4,645.00 grant during its quarterly meeting in Overland Park, May 12. The money will partially fund AKT's operating expenses for FY90.

Grants totalling more than \$630,000 for the coming fiscal year were awarded to arts organizations, schools, and other institutions in 52 different Kansas communities. The KAC received 123 applications with requests for grant monies totalling over \$1,137,931.

Major grants for up to 50 percent of operational and arts program expenses, or, in the case of project support grants, up to 50 percent of project-related program and administrative expenses, were awarded in four grants categories and two Arts In Education categories.

These grants became effective with the beginning of KAC's new fiscal year, July 1.



*Boot Hill Repertory Company cast members Greg Smith, left, and Kent Ross will team up with Dodge City radio station KGNO/K-95 to promote the company's production of "Greater Tuna."*

The framework for this horseshot (which is completely in the spirit of the "Greater Tuna" script) involves the Tuna radio station boosting its power and in effect "taking over" the Dodge City station's broadcast for that 15 minutes, prefaced by an announcement that "...the following is a presentation of the Boot Hill Repertory Company . . ."

The material for each segment is loosely scripted from ideas developed by the show's director and the actors themselves. The content of each segment was drawn from the concepts and characters in the

original script, which lend themselves ideally to creative comment on local Dodge City events, issues, and personalities.

Also included are jingles and spots created for the Company's stage version of the show. These range from simple ads for local Tuna businesses, complete with canned radio commercial music, to full-blown musical spots composed and recorded by members of the Company.

Following their appearance on the AM station, one of the actors from the show is interviewed in character live by the FM deejay.

The station will build interest in these broadcasts through on-air promo spots, and through print behind-the-scenes interviews with cast members, the design staff, and hopefully the authors themselves via telephone.

In return for their help with the promotion, the station is billed as co-sponsor of the event. Members of the station's staff will make personal appearances at each of the performances, even helping serve

(Continued on page 5)



'Death In Springfield,' or . . .

## How Not To Compete In A Regional AACT/FEST

Larry T. Romine,  
Executive Director  
Wichita Community Theatre

The cry of "wagons ho" was heard late in April from the basement of Wichita's Century II complex, where Wichita Community

Theatre has its scene shop and storage facilities. A "rent-a-truck", followed by several car loads of actors and crew, excitedly started their trip to Springfield, Mo., for the Regional AACT/FEST competition and unknown doom.

The trip was as pleasant as five hours of twisting, at times shoulderless, Southeastern Kansas two-lane roads can be, including pit-stops in Fredonia and Pittsburg.

Cast and crew finally assembled at the lovely University Plaza Hotel in Springfield, decided to have a light supper, and retire early, as we were scheduled to be the first performance of the weekend's competition the next day. Five members of the company ordered club sandwiches and all were duly served, little knowing what the night would bring.

With the dawn's first light, company members starting calling each other, arranging to meet in the coffee shop for breakfast. It was then that the specter of "food poisoning" reared its ugly head, as the five who had consumed the by-now infamous "club sandwiches" were at death's door.

One of the victims was an M.D. who assured everyone there was no need to complete "last wills and testaments" or make hasty funeral arrangements; that time and nature would cure all. Bed rest was prescribed, and a line rehearsal was scheduled for 4:00 o'clock that afternoon in the director's room.

(Continued on page 4)

## ACAAK Offers Suggestions For Dealing With Legislators

With government funding becoming such an important consideration in the arts, AKT members should become more active in making their representatives aware of the importance of these arts activities in their home districts.

How many member theatres, for example, include their senators and representatives (both state and federal) on their newsletter mailing lists? How many routinely send news releases to legislators? These people need to be reminded frequently that the arts are a priority among their constituents.

The Association of Community Arts Agencies of Kansas (ACAAK) recommends the following strategies when approaching legislators:

- \* \* Invite your legislators to your performances and events.
- \* \* Support whole-heartedly ACAAK's Legislative Art project. (Initial information has gone out to potential participating arts agencies. If your agency hasn't been contacted and you are interested in taking part, call ACAAK, 913/475-3913.)
- \* \* Actively express your appreciation to your legislator for supporting the arts in the past (if appropriate) and express your hope for continued/increased support in the future.

ACAAK has the mailing addresses and home phone numbers for most legislators.

Remember, as former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Thomas P. O'Neill said, "All politics is local." The policies of our government must reflect the concerns of the people — your concerns! Let your concern for the arts show!



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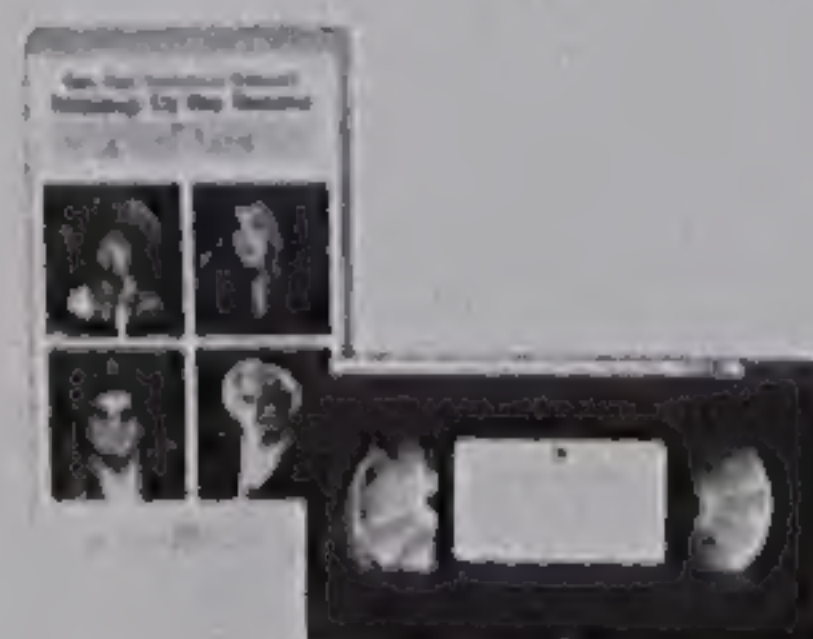
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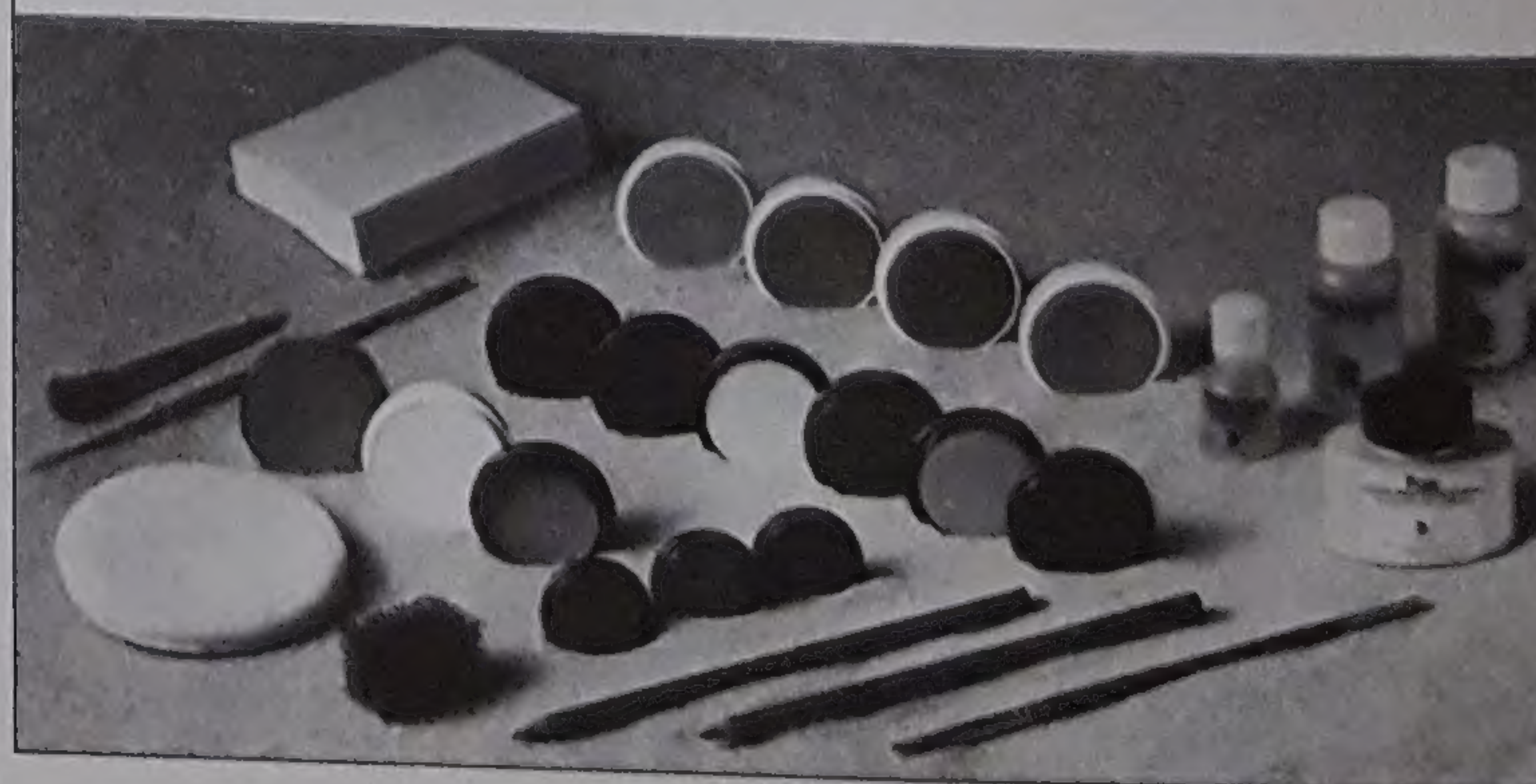
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## Midwest Opera Houses Studied In Project

The midwest opera house was a multi-purpose building in any frontier community wanting to establish "staying power". From town meetings to roller skating to touring companies (which might actually bring an opera but frequently might not) the opera house was the center of social life in many communities of the region.

A group of researchers, headed by **Judith Zivanovic**, Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of Kansas State University, have spent the last five years researching midwest opera houses, and this research has culminated in the book, **Opera Houses of the Midwest**, which includes a study of all important, but particularly extant, opera houses and opera house artifacts in the states of Iowa, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota.

*Kansas, Missouri, and Minnesota were also part of the study, but the researchers were not able to complete the project, and it is hoped that this research can be completed for an addendum to the present book.*

The research and publication, sponsored by the Mid-America Theatre Conference and foundations and historical societies of the states, has resulted in preservation of the history of the opera house through recorded oral histories, identification and preservation of artifacts, aid in establishing extant opera houses as historical sites to preserve the buildings themselves, and may have the impact on other regions of encouraging them to undertake a similar study.

The history of what has come to be called "the Middle Border" is largely a history of its towns. Each community assumed it would grow to be the biggest and the best, but as the frontier pushed farther to the West and newspapers lured people from the last town to the next frontier, wise developers began to see the necessity of softening the difficult lives of citizens and making the town more desirable through the addition of various amenities.

At first, it was not possible to have a town without at least one store, a blacksmith shop and perhaps a saloon or livery stable; soon, citizens interested in the cultural life of the community

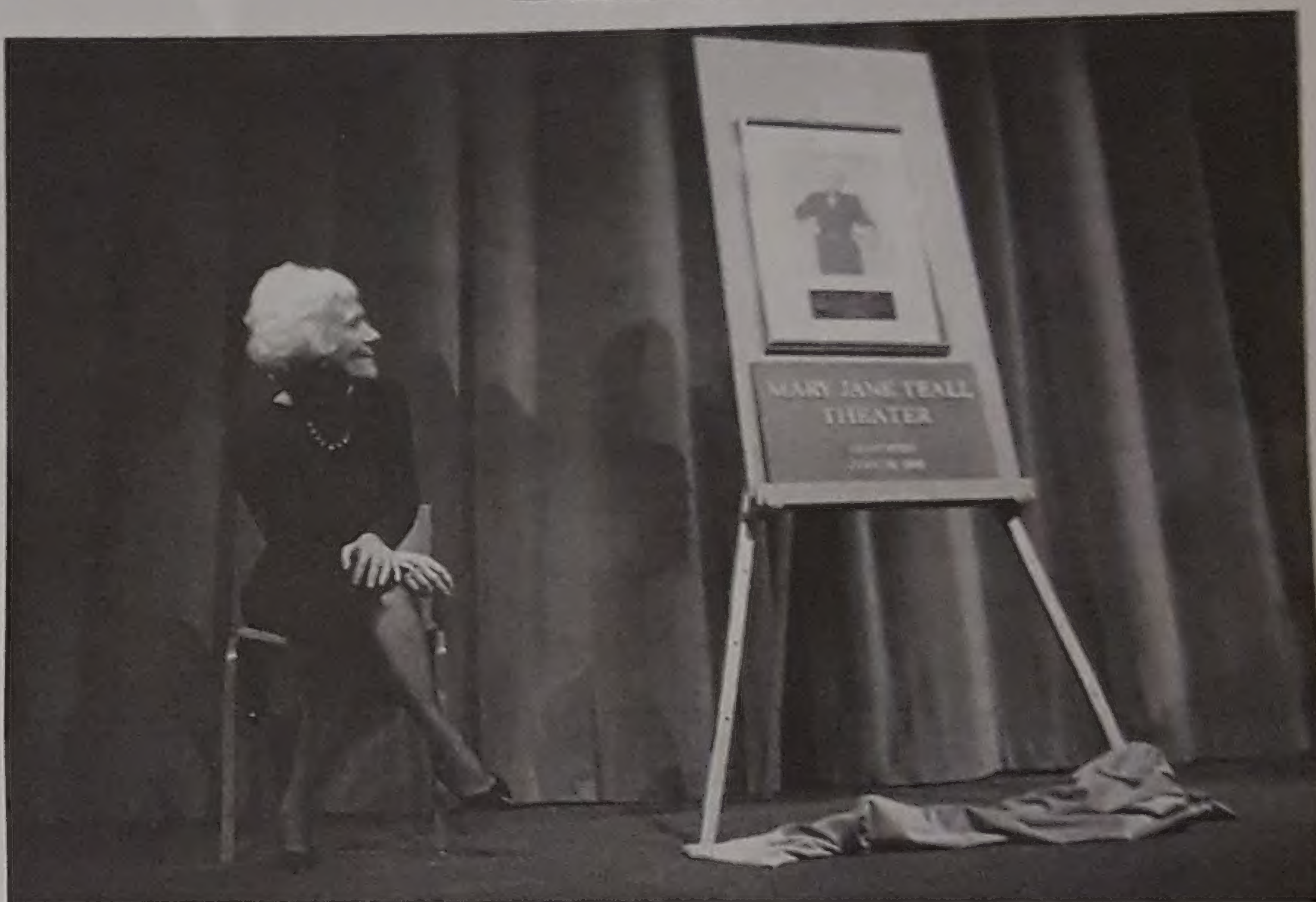
pressed for an opera house or hall (so named, it is assumed, for its more moral connotation than the term "theatre" inspired).

Many of the opera houses were taken by fire, converted to motion picture theaters, or razed to make way for "progress"; however, some still remain, perhaps not presently used for the cultural or social events of earlier days, but others have never ceased their dedication to the cultural life of the community and a few in each state are being restored to that life.

### Editor's Note:

Zivanovic writes that she would be pleased with contact from any AKT member who would be interested in sharing material about Kansas Opera Houses, or, better yet, chairing the research project for Kansas.

Contact: Judith Zivanovic  
Associate Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Eisenhower Hall - KSU  
Manhattan, KS 66506



*Community Theatre Division member Mary Jane Teall takes her first look at the portrait and plaque that turned Wichita's Century II Little Theatre into the "Mary Jane Teall Theatre" during ceremonies attended by local arts patrons, civic dignitaries, and friends, June 29. Borrowing from Mark Twain's Huck Finn, Teall joked that the tribute, which accompanied the presentation and included videotaped reminiscences by associates over the years, made her feel as if she were watching her own funeral. Teall has been a force in Wichita theatre for 43 years, first as director of the Wichita Community Theatre; as a teacher/director in the theatre department at The Wichita State University; currently as producer/director of her latest project, Cabaret Royale's "Laugh at '89", and as a freelance director/consultant involved in a number of other theatrical projects. (Photo courtesy Wichita Eagle-Beacon/Butch Ireland)*

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## Springfield . . .

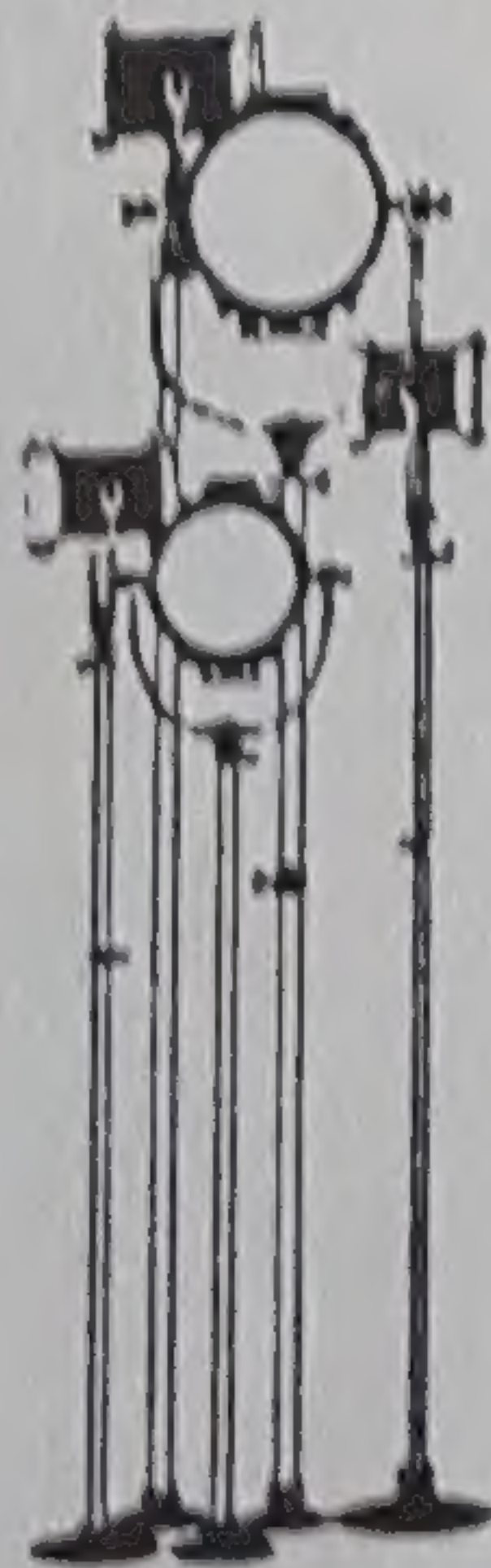
(Continued from page 2)

Come 4:00 p.m., the company assembled, albeit some with cramps and the urge to stay very close to lavatory facilities. A pronounced coloring of Kelly green was also observed on several faces. In the true tradition of the theatre, the line rehearsal was completed, and it was off to the theatre for the 7:00 p.m. curtain.

Competition nerves not withstanding, cast and crew bravely struggled through with the performance, forcing back waves of nausea. One cast member almost passed out, causing a late entrance which was covered like real pros by the rest of the cast and crew.

All said and done, we are very proud of our people for even going on with the show. That we did not win was assuaged by the fact that we did our best under very trying circumstances. Should we again be selected to represent Kansas in future competitions, we will travel to the host city with a portable kitchen among our sets and costumes.

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## Newsletter Is Recruiting Tool

Former AKT President, **Teresa Stohs** clipped this item out of the **AIRS Newsletter** and sent it along. By just changing the initials of the organization, it is equally valid for AKT members.

\* \* \*

*"When you have finished reading the newsletter, what do you do with it?"*

- Commit it to memory?*
- Save it for posterity?*
- Relegate it to file 13?*

*How about adding one other possibility to the above listing? The newsletter is a benefit of membership, which, of course, means those who are*

*not members of AKT do not receive the newsletter. Logical, isn't it?*

*The newsletter is one of the tangible benefits of membership in AKT. If membership in AKT is of value to you, why don't you, when you have finished with the newsletter, identify someone in your organization, community or area who may equally benefit from membership in AKT and share the newsletter with them as an introduction and invitation? The more we reach out to incorporate others, the stronger we become. And who are our best advocates but each of us in our own locales? Think about it!"*

**—AIRS Newsletter**

## Introducing Lee Moss . . .

Members who have called or visited the Central Office recently have already met the latest "addition" to the AKT "staff", **Lee Irene Moss**.

As part of her duties as Parklane Officenter receptionist/secretary, Lee will open the library and check out scripts, answer questions, take

messages, etc., to assist AKT members.

Originally from Laconia, New Hampshire (with stops in San Rafael, California, and Reno, Nevada), Lee developed an interest in theatre when she worked as head usher; then, concessionaire, and finally cashier at the Colonial Theatre in her hometown. As an accounting supervisor for a catering firm in Reno, she maintained a show business connection doing parties for the entertainers who headlined the shows at local nightspots and casinos, and by regular theatre and ballet attendance.

Lee's hobbies include bowling and golf, embroidery, swimming, and cooking, and she and her husband, David, a retired Air Force veteran, enjoy attending Wichita-area theatres in their spare time.



Lee Moss

## Innovations of the Century —

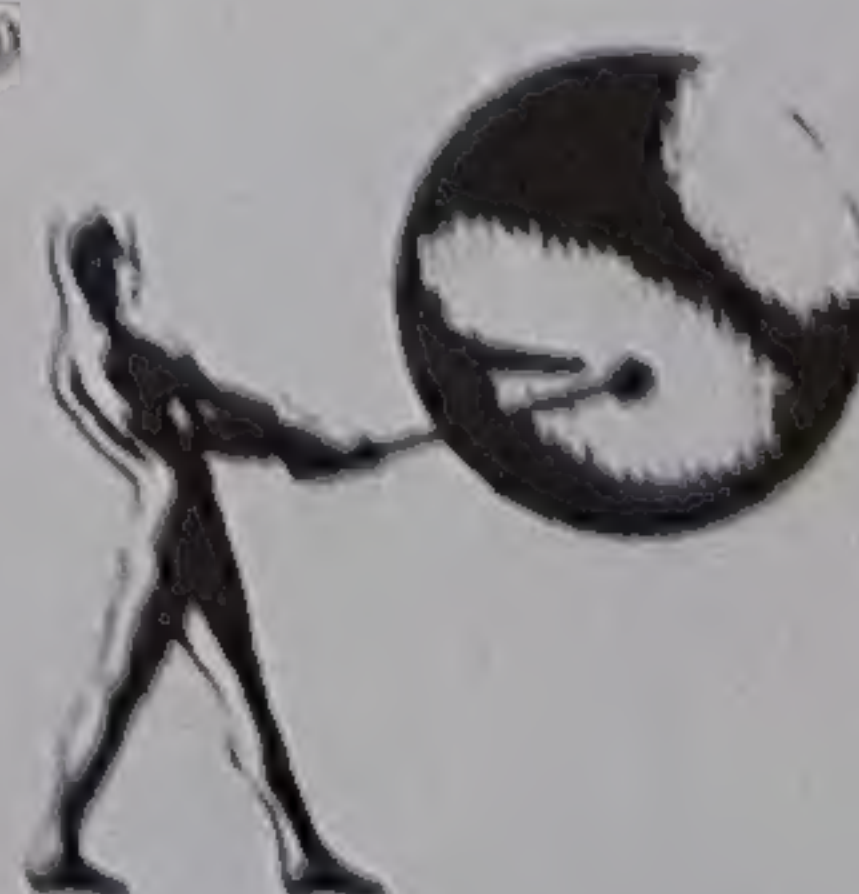
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# 1989-90 AKT Membership Drive Begins In August

It's that time of the year again . . .

AKT members are reminded that the membership year runs from September 1 through August 31, so it is not too early to start budgeting for renewals.

Individual memberships will remain \$18, with a special \$10 membership to encourage par-

## Tuna . . .

(Continued from page 1)

the dinner, as do members of the Company.

"The Return of 'Greater Tuna'" plays Sept. 7-10 and 14-17, with dinner served at 6:30 pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and brunch served at 1 pm Sunday. Tickets are \$15 per person. Reservations are absolutely necessary, and may be made by calling the Company at (316) 227-8188.

ticipation in AKT activities by students and senior citizens.

Organizations pay a sliding scale of dues, based on their annual budget. Organizations operating on less than \$5,000 per year owe \$35. Those with budgets ranging from \$5,000 to \$9,999 pay \$40, and those whose budgets top \$10,000 annually are assessed a \$70 charge.

New this year is the opportunity to pay dues through the use of VISA or MasterCard. All a member need do is provide a card number and expiration date conveniently by phone (316-685-9306) and his or her membership will be processed without the hassle of writing and mailing a check.

Members are also encouraged to become "Contributing" members as well. For as little as \$50, members can add additional badly needed support to AKT's activities

and have his or her name listed in each issue of the *MARQUEE* and in the Convention Program as a special friend of AKT.

The major benefit of AKT membership is the chance to stand up and be counted as a supporter of theatre and the arts in general in Kansas, and to be part of a network of people in the state who share similar interests and concerns. Members automatically affiliate with a division of AKT dealing with their special theatre interest: children's theatre, community theatre, secondary school theatre, university/college theatre, or professional theatre.

In addition, they are invited to attend the annual convention; they receive the *MARQUEE* and other publications (directories, calendars of events, etc.), as well as free or discounted tickets to many Kansas theatre productions. They are also eligible for a number of financial grants, and have access to the extensive script library at the Central Office.

Membership checks (both renewal and new applications) should be made out to "AKT" and sent to the AKT Central Office, 949 Parklane, Suite 332, Wichita, Kansas 67218.



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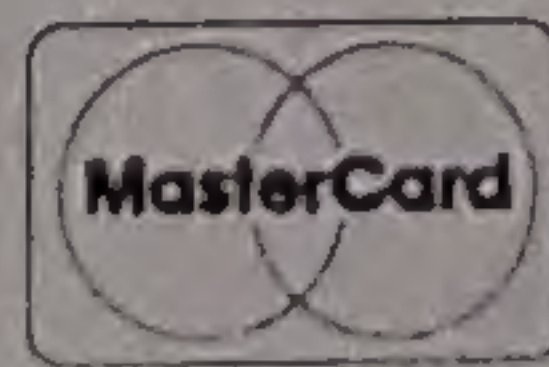
\* 1989 "Wheat logo" Note Cards - \$4.00 per packet. Postage 50¢ - per packet.

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#### Organizational

Small (Budget: Under \$5,000/yr)	\$35
Medium (Budget: \$5,000-\$9,999/yr)	\$40
Large (Budget: Over \$10,000/yr)	\$70

#### Contributing

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**949 Parklane, Suite 332**  
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For information concerning how you can become a Contributing Member, contact the AKT Central Office at 316-685-9306.

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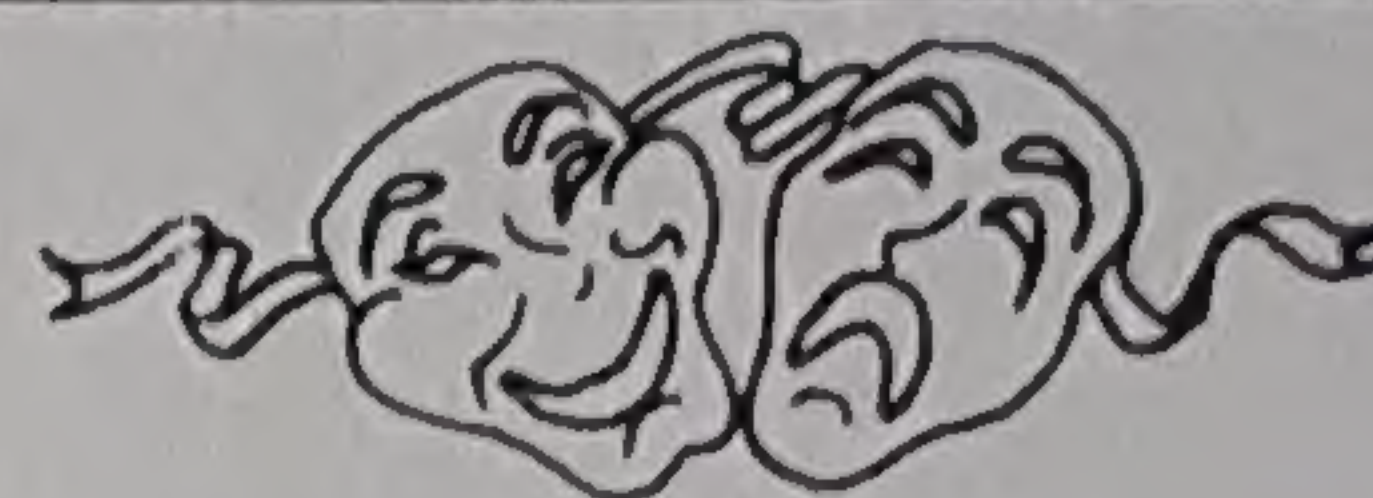
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**John A. Gedraitis,**  
Executive Director/Editor



*Sen. Audrey Langworthy, center, displays a plaque commemorating her selection by AKT as the first "Legislative Leader of Theatre and the Arts." Making the presentation at the senator's Prairie Village office recently were AKT president Lendley Black and past-president Teresa Stohs. Langworthy was cited for her support of the arts in Kansas, including her sponsorship of the Bi-State Cultural and Recreational Bill, and a bill designating the Oregon Trail through Kansas. Langworthy has also been instrumental in the development of "Two Trails West," a pageant drama which will highlight the important role of Johnson County in the development of the Santa Fe and Oregon Trails.*



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